

THE NEWS THE GOSS THE PICS THE SPORT

DAILY STAR

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2004

SIMPLY THE BEST 7 DAYS A WEEK 35p



3 Black Watch troops killed by suicide bomber



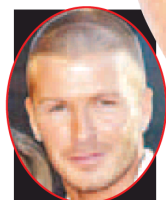
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DIRTY DEN IS SACKED

EXCLUSIVE
● Page 7

BECKS WILL QUIT IN 2 YEARS



MOVIE GOAL:
Posh & Becks

Posh shock: We're off

ENGLAND captain David Beckham has decided to quit football in two years – and head for Hollywood.

Wife Posh dropped the bombshell yester-

EXCLUSIVE

day, saying: "We are thinking of moving to Los Angeles."

Friends say Becks

aims to go out on a high by winning the 2006 World Cup.

Then he'll move to the States and bid to score as a movie hero.

Full story: Page 9

loaded

MYLEENE

She's top of
the Klass

EXCLUSIVE

● Page 23

Picture: LOADED / JOHN STODDART



Rates frozen again

MILLIONS of homeowners were spared mortgage increases for the third month in a row as the Bank of England held interest rates at 4.75%.

And business leaders were also celebrating, with the move fuelling speculation that rates may now have peaked.

The decision to put any rise on hold, by the

Bank's Monetary Policy Committee, followed data suggesting the economy was slowing. That continued with the announcement by the Halifax that house prices fell by 1.1% in October.



CRITICAL: Yasser Arafat

Arafat in a coma

PALESTINIAN chief Yasser Arafat was clinging to life last night amid reports he was only being kept alive by machines.

The 75-year-old former guerrilla leader had slipped into a coma in the French military hospital where he was being treated for a serious blood condition.

Close aides denied he was dead, but said his condition - which was already "critical" - had

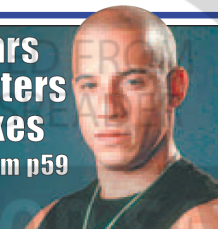
worsened. They admitted that the outlook was bleak.

Arafat has never groomed a successor and there were fears that his death could leave a dangerous power vacuum in the Middle East.

Last night some of his powers were handed over to Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei, who is described as a leading moderate.

Stars Letters Jokes

Forum p59



GOSS 16-17 ● JANE 42
HOT 20-21 ● TELLY 48-51
JONO 35 ● CITY 62

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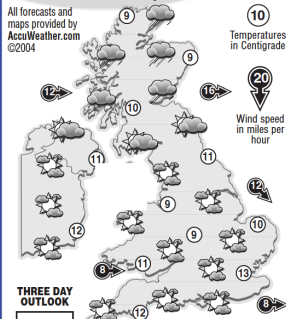
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INFO STATION

TODAY: Plenty of cloud over Scotland today with a few showery periods. Sunny intervals across England, Wales and Northern Ireland with a mild afternoon.

OUTLOOK: Rather cloudy across the United Kingdom Saturday with some outbreaks of rain over Scotland and northern England. A few showers will fall in southern England and Wales.

All forecasts and maps provided by AccuWeather.com ©2004



THREE DAY OUTLOOK

Saturday P.M. rain

Sunday Some sun

Monday Sunny

POUND ABROAD

Australia	2.45 dollars
Canada	2.24 dollars
Cyprus	0.83 pounds
Czech Republic	45.35 korunas
Mexico	21.19 pesos
South Africa	11.25 rand
Thailand	76.19 baht
Turkey	2707236 lira
United States	1.85 dollars

EURO

Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Holland, Portugal, Spain € 1.44

ABROAD

Alicante	rain	19c	(66f)	N. York	showers	11c	(52f)
Corfu	fair	22c	(71f)	Nice	thunder	18c	(64f)
Dublin	fair	11c	(52f)	Paris	fair	12c	(53f)
L. Angeles	showers	19c	(66f)	Rhodes	cloudy	23c	(73f)
Majorca	thunder	18c	(64f)	Rome	fair	23c	(73f)
Miami	thunder	28c	(82f)	Tenerife	fair	19c	(66f)

Star Weather

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Calls cost 60p/min from a BT landline

LOTTO DAILY PLAY

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4

4 12 13 16 18 24 25

No ticket matched all 7 balls for the £30,000 prize

SATURDAY LOTTO

OCTOBER 30

3 8 9 26 27 47 45

Two ticket holders won the £4.5m jackpot

EXTRA: 21, 24, 25, 30, 31, 41 T-Ball: 1, 11, 16, 28, 29 (Tb 5)

No Extra winners. Two T-Ball winners get £250,000

WEDNESDAY LOTTO

NOVEMBER 3

5, 25, 33, 35, 36, 39 Bonus Ball: 43

One winner scoops £3.3m jackpot.

EXTRA: 3, 17, 31, 33, 39, 44 T-Ball: 7, 9, 17, 25, 27 (Tb 5)

No one won the £1.7m jackpot. No £250k T-Ball winners.

EURO LOTTO

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29

1, 8, 32, 35, 38 Lucky Star Numbers 4, 9

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

Recycled paper made up of 60% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 2000

BUSH OFF, GEORGE

Straw rules out British attack on Iran



PLEDGE: Jack Straw

by MACER HALL, Political Editor

FOREIGN Secretary Jack Straw yesterday vowed there was no chance of Britain joining President Bush in an invasion of Iran.

He warned an attack on the rogue Islamic state that involved British troops was "inconceivable".

His comments came amid fears that Bush could launch a military strike on the state he suspects is continuing with its nuclear weapons programme.

But his stand could put him on a collision course with Tony Blair who wants to maintain his tough international alliance with President Bush.

Mr Straw revealed growing differences at the heart of the Government about how tough to get with Iran.

The Foreign Secretary said: "I don't see any circumstances in which military action would be justified against Iran."

And Mr Straw added: "Not only is that inconceivable, but I think the prospect of it happening is inconceivable."

The chances of another war in the near future were "pretty remote", Mr Straw claimed.

Urged

During the run-up to the war in Iraq, Mr Straw had urged Mr Blair to be more cautious.

Leaked Cabinet documents revealed his fears that the invasion may have been illegal.

And the Prime Minister was backed by hawkish Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon, who has said more wars were likely in "the foreseeable future".

But many Cabinet Ministers are desperate to stop Britain being dragged into another conflict.

In a magazine interview, Mr Hoon said: "I suspect that all sophisticated countries with significant military are going to be involved in these kinds of operations at least for the foreseeable future."

"It is partly the inevitable consequence of the end of the Cold War."

Civil war on cuts

by ALAN JONES

HUNDREDS of thousands of civil servants will stage a 24-hour strike today over job cuts.

The action will cause disruption to many services, including job-centres, benefit offices, driving tests and even museums.

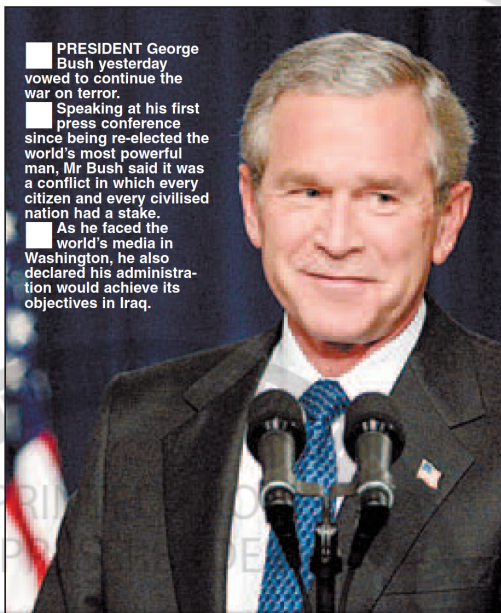
Today's walkout by the Public and Commercial Services union will be the biggest in the civil service in over a decade.

Picket lines will be mounted at Government offices. The union is

protesting at plans to axe more than 100,000 jobs and is warning they will have a "devastating" impact on services to the public.

General Secretary Mark Serwotka said: "These cuts will do nothing to improve service delivery and mean people will have to travel further to access services."

"Decent public services need civil servants to deliver them."



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Lucy

IT'S luscious Lucy Becker's first time on Page 3 - and she's just the girl to light your fuse on Guy Fawkes Night.

The 23-year-old whiz-bang babe from Barnet, north London, adores fire-work displays.

And she's certainly had more than a spark of excitement lately - she's just got back from her honeymoon in Las Vegas.

PETER CHAOS



CHEESY DOES IT: Kay does his cabaret double-act with Wossy

He turns chat show into Phoenix Nights

PETER KAY turns Jonathan Ross's chat show into a cheesy Phoenix Nights cabaret this evening - and lands his host in chaos.

Telly star Wossy, 43, was planning to talk to the Bolton funnyman about his new sitcom, but Kay had other ideas.

Instead of settling down on the sofa, he rushed over to the show's camp warm-up band and grabbed a mic.

A show insider said: "Peter immediately went into a cheesy cabaret medley with Four Poofs And A Piano. Jonathan didn't know what to do, but Peter was telling him to join in. So after a few minutes, he came over and they did a duet."

Kay, 31, was meant to be promoting his new Channel 4 comedy Max And Paddy, a spin-off from his hit Phoenix Nights.

Nappies

But because of his musical double-act with his host, he never managed to get round to the subject.

He told Wossy: "That Green Room's a bad idea. You can't relax, you're nervous, it's intimidating. I'm sitting there with Gwen Stefani, who last week I thought was a fella."

Turning to the subject of his baby son Charlie, he added: "I do the nappies. Frankie Dettori didn't do

EXCLUSIVE by MARK JEFFERIES

nappies and I went right off him. It's wrong in this day and age."

Kay's hilarious appearance on the show came just days after he revealed that he'd turned down a chance to appear on rival chat show Parkinson.

And it seems Peter's recent visits to the gym are paying off. Our source said: "He looked far flatter than a few months ago."

He's been trying to shape up after admitting his recent My Mum Wants A Bungalow tour of 180 venues left him exhausted.

Other guests on Wossy's show, on BBC1 at 10.35pm tonight, are singer Gwen, 34, and axed 007 star Pierce Brosnan, 51.

PEAS EASE UP

STORE bosses have developed a pea that won't roll off your fork. Sainsbury's "pea shoot" is a leaf with all the taste of a pea.

HOT PICS TO YOUR MOBILE

DOWNLOAD a great topless picture of Lucy direct to your mobile by texting STARBABE to 88833. See Page 39 for full details.

● Downloads cost £1.50 plus your usual network SIMS rate. Calls cost £1.50 a minute. Average call length: One minute.



YOU'RE MY No 1, LIZ

LUSCIOUS Liz Hurley was left fuming when a cheeky teenager begged her to take his virginity.

The 19-year-old hopeful - an Aussie DJ called Rockhill - was hauled off by security guards at a party after begging the model to give him his first lesson in lust.

"Elizabeth looked furi-

■ by LAURA NEIL

ous," said an onlooker. "She didn't find it funny at all."

Randy Rockhill splashed out £100 to meet Liz, 39, at the charity bash in Sydney. He claimed he was surprised by the response.

"I thought she'd be well up for it," he moaned.



TAKE ME: Sexy Liz

Toll of horror

YESTERDAY'S toll was the worst for British troops in Iraq since six Redcap soldiers died 16 months ago.

The Royal Military Police members were massacred by a 400-strong mob who besieged them in the city of Al Majar Al Kabir.

Devastated families of the dead heroes are now considering taking legal action against the Ministry of Defence.

3 BLACK WATCH HEROES KILLED BY SUICIDE BOMBER

Lorry blast as Iraqis launch mortar blitz

THREE British squadies were killed yesterday in an Iraqi suicide attack.

Eight other Black Watch troops were injured by shrapnel in the lorry-bomb and mortar ambush on their armoured patrol vehicle.

An Iraqi translator was also killed as the Warrior was rammed by a suicide truck bomber then bombarded with mortar fire. The Warrior was torn apart.

The carnage, described last night by Armed Forces Minister Adam Ingram "as a co-ordinated, well planned attack" came on the first full day of the regiment's controversial mission - codename Operation Bracken - in the Iraqi Triangle of Death.

The killings sparked new anger over Tony Blair's controversial decision to send soldiers to the danger zones south of Baghdad.

Earlier, the Prime Minister had promised the troops would be "home by Christmas".

But last night, the three soldiers' devastated families were told they would never be coming home again.

One of the victims, 19-year-old Paul Lowe, had been due to return home to Kelly, Fife, last week.

Paul, a private in the Pipes and Drums Decoy 1 Black Watch, had a 17-year-old brother Craig in the same regiment.

The two other victims have not yet been named.

Attack

The eight injured in the bomb attack were not seriously hurt. Six returned to the 850-strong battlegroup after treatment and the other two were expected to be released last night.

The patrol was thought to be attempting to wipe out rebels who have been bombarding the Black Watch's Camp Dogwood site with mortars since the troops arrived.

The bomb exploded just as Britain's top military officer, Chief of Defence Staff General Michael Walker, was visiting the base to boost morale.

Gen Walker was briefed on the attack before being whisked away minutes later in a US Black Hawk helicopter, cancelling a planned press conference.

The Black Watch are tak-



ON THE SPOT: Gen Walker was visiting

from PADRAIC FLANAGAN at Camp Dogwood

ing over from US troops preparing for a massive attack on the rebel stronghold of Fallujah.

Mr Blair's spokesman said last night: "The Prime Minister's thoughts are with the Black Watch and the families of the Black Watch."

But critics were already lining up to blame the Prime Minister for the soldiers' deaths.

Roseanna Cunningham, the SNP Scottish Assembly member for Perth - home of the Black Watch - described the attack as "utterly horrifying and, sadly, what we feared would happen".

She added: "My deepest sympathies go out to all the family and friends of those killed."

"It's doubly disgraceful that when Black Watch soldiers are dying in Iraq, the Prime Minister wants to disband the regiment."

At Westminster, MPs were sombre as Mr Ingram gave the first news of the attack.

Asked later if the soldiers' lives were a price

worth paying for the war in Iraq, the Minister said: "The Iraqi people are the best to judge that. They want their country back."

Mr Ingram sent his "condolences" to the families of those killed.

The attack came as the troops began patrolling the east bank of the Euphrates river, a network of canals and swamps infested with rebel killers.

The Black Watch had already met a ferocious welcome after arriving at Camp Dogwood this week.

The base has been peppered with a series of mortar strikes.

Two more rockets hit the area yesterday, but failed to explode.

Rescue

And another of their Warrior vehicles was ripped apart by a roadside bomb on Wednesday.

The crew radioed for help, but as a second Warrior in the patrol sped to the rescue a huge mortar exploded just feet away. Luckily, no one was killed.

The death of three Black Watch soldiers takes to 73 the number British service personnel killed in Iraq since March 2003.

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BROTHERS IN ARMS: Paul, Barry and Craig on exercise on Salisbury Plain

BOY WHO DREAMED OF ARMY

THIS is the picture the grieving family of Black Watch soldier Paul Lowe – one of the three heroes murdered yesterday – will always treasure.

The 19-year-old private, left, smiles as he relaxes in the sunshine front of his Warrior during Army exercises on Salisbury Plain in June.

And the snap is very much a family affair. Beside him is his brother Craig, 17, right, and cousin Barry, 22 – all members of the same proud

■ by ANTHONY WALTON

regiment. Paul had joined the Black Watch three years ago to fulfil the dream of a soldier's life that he had held since he was eight.

Brother Craig had just returned to Scotland after a brief spell in Iraq with the Black Watch at Basra.

Last night he was comforting grief-stricken mum Helen, 42, at home in Keltie, Fife. She was too upset to

speaking but a friend said: "Everyone is shattered."

"Paul was originally due home from Iraq on Sunday. He had had enough out there and just wanted to come home. You can imagine how tough this has been."

In a letter, which arrived the day before he was killed, Paul wrote: "I'm to go tomorrow to work with the Americans."

"Where I'm going there is no internet. So keep the letters coming."



BARRICADES: Sand and rock barriers were yesterday being thrown round Camp Dogwood to protect British troops

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10 years since the first draw, it's now our favourite flutter

LUCKY LOTTO

IT'S brought joy to millions – and millions in cash to many lucky winners. Now the Lotto is celebrating its 10th birthday by naming tomorrow the very first National Lottery Day.

Since it began back in 1994, the game has thrown up some fascinating stories and statistics. Here, JAMES MOORE presents the Lotto lot, with 49 facts about this national institution – one for each ball of the draw...

1 THE luckiest lottery outlet in the country is Star News in Newton, Powys, which has sold tickets to more than 250 winners since the draw began.

2 A TOTAL of two million people across the UK win a cash prize of some sort on the lottery every week.

3 IF YOU want to strike it lucky, you'd better get a job on a building site. Builders are the workers most likely to win a prize.

4 WINNER Tommy Cone got so bored with his super-rich lifestyle after scooping £4.2m he asked for his old job back – as a £4.50-an-hour security guard.

5 THAT'S the number of lottery machines. They are called Lancelot, Arthur, Guinevere, Merlin and Galahad. The machines are made in Pennsylvania, USA, and each costs £50,000.

6 THE very first jackpot sum ever to be won on our national lottery was a total of £6.9million.

7 THE seven most popular items lottery winners snap up with their loot are a new house, a car, a holiday, jewellery, a holiday home, a pet and a sound system.

8 ...IS THE number of people within 20 miles of Glasgow who have won at least £1m. It's Scot to be lucky!

9 THERE are 10 sets of lottery balls used in the draws, which cost £2,500 each. The ninth set has never been used.

10 THAT'S the age David Sweeney will be on the lottery's birthday – he was born the night it started. And he proved a lucky mascot – two years later, his family won £1.9m.

11 AMONG the oddest items bought with winnings are a road sweeper machine, a water buffalo, a football club and boob jobs.

12 IS THE number of months it took Karl Crompton to blow £3.5m of the £10.9m jackpot he scooped in 1996.

13 THAT'S the number of millionaires created by the lottery in Ilford, Essex – the UK's luckiest town.

14 THE Eden Project in Cornwall is one of the lottery's success stories. It has been given £53m of Lotto money, but has made more than £100m for the South West's economy.

15 SINCE it began, the lottery has created a total of 1,700 millionaires.

16 IS the number of billions of pounds it has raised for more than 180,000 good causes.

17 ONE old lady arrived to claim her dosh dragging a big bag – for the "huge cheque they give you".

18 THE first draw was hosted by Anthea Turner and Noel Edmonds.



19 A PUNTER's girlfriend checked his trouser pockets before putting his jeans into the washing machine – and found a winning ticket worth around £1.5m.

20 THAT'S the amount in millions won by the biggest single jackpot winner to go public – Iris Jeffrey in July this year.

21 FEWER than 1% of gambling problems in the UK are said to be related to lottery.

22 THE number in millions who watched the first National Lottery Show on November 19, 1994.

23 A WHOPPING 94% of the adult population of the United Kingdom has

played the national lottery at some time.

24 CARS are a top buy with jackpot winners – and just over a third snap up a new BMW.

25 THE highest guaranteed jackpots were £25m on November 22, 1997, and November 28, 1998. These were superdraws held to celebrate the lottery's third and fourth anniversaries.

26 WAYNE Elliot, of Deal, Kent, is a really lucky man – he won a prize every week for the first 26 weeks of the draw.

27 THAT'S the percentage of female lottery winners who admit having hidden their winning tickets in their bras.

28 OUT of every £1 you spend on the Lotto, a total of 28p goes towards good causes.

29 LUCKY Brenda Wainwright hired a limo for the trip to collect her £50,000 scratchcard winnings.

30 THE biggest number of winners of a single jackpot on the lottery was 133. Each of them received £120,000.



LOVELY BUBBLY: Victoria Jones, 29, of Devizes, Wilts, yesterday celebrates hitting a £2.2m jackpot – just a month after her marriage to Jason, 29

31 THAT'S the day in August 1997 when Princess Diana died. The lottery was cancelled on the following Wednesday and Saturday as a mark of respect.

32 IS THE combined ages of the two youngest winners, Tracie Makin and Callie Rogers. Both were 16 when they won £1m.

33 THE number of people in a Camden Council syndicate who won £300,000 each in January 1998.

34 SARAH Louise Wood fainted on discovering she'd won £75,000 on a scratchcard – and ended up collecting it with a black eye.

35 ONE in 10 winners and their immediate families have bought at least 10 cars since striking it lucky.

36 AN amazing 97% of jackpot winners admit they continue to play the Lotto.

37 THE United States is the top holiday destination for those lucky lottery winners.

38 LOTTERY playbooks are made from recycled paper.

39 EACH lottery ball weighs 80 grams and is 2ins in diameter. They are made of solid latex rubber.

40 ...IS THE percentage of lottery winners who are in a syndicate.

41 THE most northerly Lotto outlet is on the island of Unst in the Shetlands. It's closer to Norway than to London.

42 WINNER Marjorie Longdin was so excited, she forgot to take her ticket with her when she went to collect her cheque.

43 THE largest unclaimed prize was £2,054,754 – from a ticket bought in Hull in May 1996.

44 THE oldest winner was Gracie Vera Coulson, who was 87 when she won £1m in 1993.

45 ALMOST half of all jackpot winners have moved to a five-bedroom detached house in the countryside.

46 THAT'S the least popular number with players in a 1998 survey. Seven was the favourite.

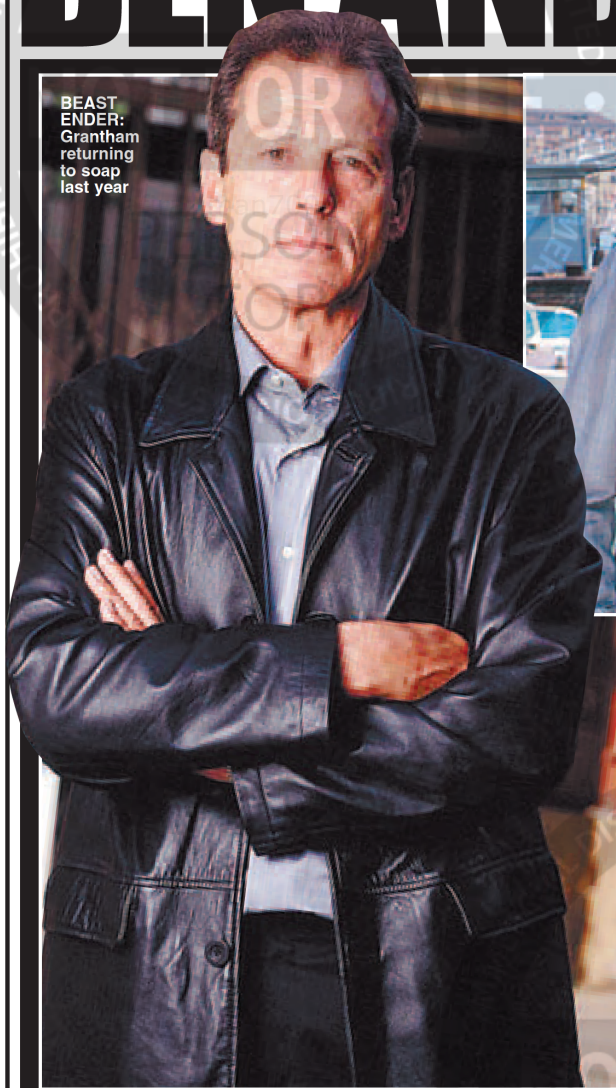
47 BILLY Gibbons changed his pet chicken's name from Kiev to Lucky after it trampled on his calculator – and he used the five numbers selected to land him a lottery win.

48 AN incredible £11,200 worth of online tickets are sold every 100 seconds.

49 VERA Young, of Grimsby, picked her jackpot line by writing figures on sweets and picking six out.

LOTTO LOLLY:
Daily Star
discovery Nell
McAndrew
plugs Lotto

DEN AND BURIED



BEAST ENDER: Grantham returning to soap last year



BIG TIME: Grantham and Anita Dobson when the show topped the ratings



FIRST EXIT: Den just before he was 'shot' in 1989

SEX shame star Leslie Grantham has been sensationally axed from EastEnders.

The Dirty Den actor has been battling to save his £275,000-a-year role since he was exposed as a kinky internet pervert.

But now bosses of the BBC1 soap have told the 57-year-old dad-of-three his days in Albert Square are over, just as the Daily Star told you way back in May.

Grantham - Britain's highest paid soap star - will leave early next year in a sizzling exit storyline.

Coffin

And a senior BBC source insisted: "This time there'll be no way back - the coffin lid will be nailed firmly shut. It is going to be one of the most explosive and sensational departures from a soap ever. It will be huge."

Officially, the top BBC1 soap will claim his departure is by "mutual consent" - but insiders claim that is far from the truth.

"They can dress it up as much as they like but the fact is Grantham was told he was finished," said an EastEnders source. "There is no future for him in the show."

"Bringing back Den was a bold move which worked for a while -

Pervy star gets EastEnders axe - and it's final

EXCLUSIVE

by NIGEL PAULEY

but ultimately proved a disaster. There's a feeling among senior executives that Grantham's antics over the past year have caused the show immense damage.

"Everyone now wants to move on and take the show forward. Getting rid of Leslie is seen as being an important part of that."

"It was impossible to sack him for his original antics because he hadn't done anything illegal. He was also involved in too many

major storylines to be dumped before they ran their course."

"However, his card was marked and it was clear he would be axed at the first available opportunity."

"Apart from anything else, there was a feeling he had become a joke figure - which meant Den couldn't be taken seriously."

Grantham lives at his family home in Wimbledon, south London, with his wife of 25 years, Jane, 54, and their three sons.

For four years until 1989 he ruled the roost as publican Den Watts. His stormy marriage to boozy wife Angie (Anita Dobson) proved a huge hit with viewers,

attracting a record 30 million viewers for a 1986 episode.

He received an offer he couldn't refuse to bring back Dirty Den from the dead last September - 14 years after the character faked his death in an apparent shooting.

But within a few months Grantham heaped shame on himself - and the show - when his sleazy internet sex sessions with strangers were exposed.

He was first accused of sending naked pictures of himself to a 23-year-old blonde. But he also slagged off his co-stars, claiming many of them took drugs.

Panto

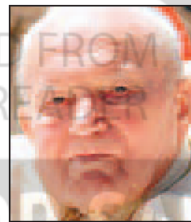
Grantham outraged his bosses by branding actress Jessie Wallace "a vile dog" and co-star Shane Richie "a bighead".

He also allegedly pleased himself via a webcam on one occasion while still dressed in his Captain Hook panto outfit.

After the cybersex revelations, the actor was suspended and told to apologise to his fellow actors.

But the axe fell in a meeting last week with new EastEnders boss Kathleen Hutchison.

"Leslie took it pretty well, it wasn't exactly unexpected," claimed the source. "Kathleen very much wants to make a clean sweep of what's gone before."



RUDE NOT TO: The Pope

Pope in sex tips

from MARK BOWNNESS in Rome

POPE John Paul II has backed a hot new sex manual that tells people to make love more often.

The guide aims to get Catholics to spice up their sex lives in an effort to halt falling birth rates in Italy.

The book, it's A Sin Not To Do It, promises to reveal "everything you wanted to know about sex but the Church (almost) never dared to tell you".

One chapter likely to raise eyebrows urges men to masturbate women if they fail to have an orgasm during intercourse.

ANNOUNCEMENT

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TRAGIC: Pretty Amy died after being hit by a drink-driver on Christmas morning. Inset, her furious parents Melanie and Kevin Gonzales at the court yesterday

OBSCENE

Killer driver's jail term cut

THE mother of a teenage girl mown down by a drink-driver blasted a decision to cut his sentence as "obscene".

Melanie Gonzales hit out after Craig Smith had his six-year jail term reduced to five by the Appeal Court yesterday.

Her daughter Amy, 18, was hit by Smith's car at 1am last Christmas Day as she crossed the road with her boyfriend, Paul Ray. She died four weeks later.

Callous

After the hearing, Melanie, 43, said: "I just can't understand how somebody with such a callous disregard for human life can only be put away for five years."

"Well, it's not even five years, because he'll be out in two. He'll be back in St Neots."

"We've got to face this and I don't know how I'm going to cope with that. How do you cope with that?"

Melanie and her husband Kevin, 45, of St Neots, Cambs, are campaigning for tougher penalties for

■ by OLIVIA MATTHEWS

drink-drivers who kill. After student Amy's death they joined other families to present a 70,000-signature petition to the Home Office.

They were shocked that the law meant Smith, 22, who pleaded guilty at Peterborough Crown Court in April to causing death

by dangerous driving, and drink-driving, could not be tried for manslaughter.

Kevin said: "We've been speaking to many families around the country and the common theme is the lack of justice when lives are taken in this way. 'This cheapens all our lives'."

"At one o'clock on Christmas morning Craig Smith destroyed our family in front of us."

"It's our town, where we raised our family, and in

two years' time he is going to be back among us. I think we're all a lot less safe because of that."

The tragedy happened after the family attended Midnight Mass.

Mr Gonzales offered to wait in the car while Amy met trainee teacher boyfriend Paul, 22, and other

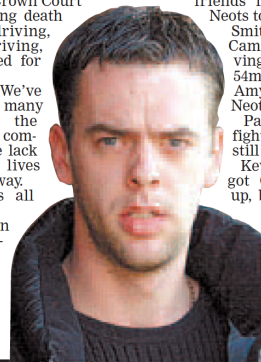
friends for a kebab in St Neots town centre.

Smith, of Eaton Socon, Cambs, had been driving his BMW at up to 54mph when he hit Amy as she crossed St Neots High Street.

Paul was also left fighting for life and is still on crutches.

Kevin added: "We've got Christmas coming up, but none of us feel like celebrating it."

"We won't put up decorations or a Christmas tree. Our family was destroyed on Christmas morning last year and I watched it happen."



MY DAVID'S AIMING TO WIN THE WORLD CUP... THEN THAT'S IT

DAVID BECKHAM wants to retire from football after winning the 2006 World Cup - and move to Hollywood.

He hopes to follow in the footsteps of Snatch star Vinnie Jones and make it big in the movies.

Pregnant Posh revealed his plans yesterday, saying they were planning to live the American dream in the film capital of the world.

Victoria said: "We are thinking about moving to L.A."

And a friend added: "Becks has been told he has a future in Hollywood. He wants to go out on a high - and what better time than after winning the 2006 World Cup in Germany?"

The news comes after Spanish police foiled an al-Qaida plot to blow up Becks and his team-mates at Real Madrid's Bernabeu Stadium.

Inspired

It also follows a nightmare year for the golden couple who have been dogged by allegations that Becks has had a string of affairs.

The England captain's contract at Real Madrid runs out in two years and Posh hinted that they are planning a new life.

Last weekend's get-together with Hollywood star Tom Cruise in Madrid is thought to have inspired Becks to try his hand at becoming a movie legend when he hangs up his football boots.

And Posh, 30, hinted that the couple may be ready to cut their teeth on an Osbournes-style reality TV show before they make the move.

She said it would prove that she and David, 29, were together because they loved each other, not just because they were protecting the "Beckham brand" - which is estimated to be worth more than £100million.

She told American magazine Us: "People could see we don't take ourselves too seriously."

"Fame can send you straight to therapy. You just have to laugh at it."

Victoria added that she and Becks were so loved up, they were already planning to have a fourth baby.

FILM DREAM: Victoria and hunk David



BURGLER: Star Will 2 held in raid on idol Young

TWO men tried to sell stolen pictures of pop star Will Young to a newspaper, a court heard yesterday.

One of them, unemployed Sharife El-Whabe, 24, was also charged with burgling the singer's home in Holland Park, west London.

He was accused of stealing clothes, keys, a computer, a bag and photographs, worth £10,400, from 25-year-old Will.

El-Whabe, and Annis Seddiki, 21, both of west London, denied the charges.

District Judge Paul Clark refused pleas for bail at West London Court and remanded both men in custody.

As he gave his decision, El-Whabe stood up and swore at the bench before being led away.

EXCLUSIVE

by JAMES WICKHAM

The singer, who is almost six months pregnant with their third child, is convinced she will have another boy.

She added: "I'm going to have a whole bloody football team!"

Friends say the couple feel there is too much bad blood in Europe for them to stay after Becks retires.

One pal said: "They have had it all - terrorists, death threats, kidnap threats and a bag of cheap tarts selling their stories."

If he gets to fulfil his World Cup dream, Becks will match the heroics of legendary England captain Bobby Moore. He lifted the Jules Rimet Trophy in 1966, then starred in the movie Escape To Victory.

A spokesperson for the Beckhams denied that they planned to move soon.

Ell of a bird

SEXY Jennifer Ellison's boyfriend has got a new bird. But the 21-year-old star isn't squawking - it's a parrot. She and Tony Richardson, 26, were spotted out buying seed to prepare a nosh she never dreamed of on Hell's Kitchen.



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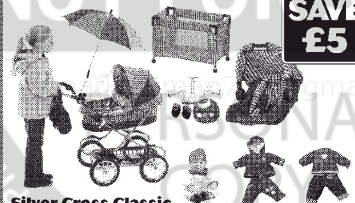
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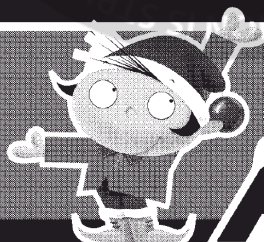
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STRAIN: Sir Andrew

Britain's near to bursting

by MACER HALL
Political Editor

IMMIGRANT hordes have sent Britain's population soaring by more than a million under Tony Blair, shock figures have revealed.

Government statistics show over 150,000 more legal migrants enter the country every year than leave.

But the real figure is feared to be far higher because of unrecorded illegals.

Threat

Critics last night claimed the influx threatened to make the UK overcrowded.

Anti-immigration campaigners Migrationwatch were outraged. Sir Andrew Green said: "This puts huge strains on our infrastructure."

"England is already the fifth most densely populated country in the world and will soon become grossly overcrowded."

Shadow Home Secretary David Davis said: "Our immigration system is a total shambles."

Jail for net con

JUNK e-mail firms were warned last night after a brother and sister were convicted for conning internet users.

Jeremy Jaynes, 30, got nine years in prison and his sister Jessica DeGroot was fined £4,000 for targeting AOL customers with massive amounts of spam.

The couple from North Carolina made £15million by sending out bogus marketing deals which lured recipients to send back cash.

Fines

Last night the Government warned UK companies they face fines of £5,000 if they flood people's e-mail addresses with unwanted bulk messages.

A spokesman for the Department of Trade said: "People can't currently be sent to prison but if there's a fraudulent element it becomes a matter for the police."

GURKHA VICTORY

A GURKHA has won £55,000 in a landmark race case after getting a monthly pension of just £95 – a fifth of a British soldier's.

SLAVE TRADE BOSS HELD IN MIGRANT SWOOP

THE kingpin behind a racket smuggling hundreds of illegal immigrants into Britain was arrested yesterday.

Seven other suspected members of the gang were also arrested as part of the Operation Maxim probe into human trafficking and slave labour. Five people are being held in Hamburg and Cologne. Police believe the

by JOHN TWOMEY

German cities were used as staging posts for the slave labour racketeers. The boss of the £10million-a-year racket was being quizzed at a London police station last night.

He is said to have owned at least 10 fast food restaurants employing illegal immigrants from Turkey.

All those arrested were of Turkish

origin and mostly in their 30s and 40s.

The illegal immigrants are said to have paid thousands of pounds to get across continental Europe and into the UK in small groups to avoid detection.

Most were men although women and children are thought to have been smuggled into the country.

Detective Chief Superintendent Steve Kupis, head of Operation Maxim, said: "They might be told they are coming here to be a student but they end up in bonded employment working in a kitchen or as a fast food chef and paid minimal wages so they can't discharge their debt."

"That's where we see a lot of violence where people try to break away and disappear and there are kidnappings."

Raids

Detectives believe the racket had been operating for several years and "many hundreds" had successfully evaded immigration controls.

The operation between police and the immigration service took a year to plan. Fifty police officers and 15 immigration officers were involved in the raids in London and Surrey just after 6am.

Scotland Yard Assistant Commissioner Tarique Ghaffur said: "Working with our European colleagues has enabled us to take out an entire human-trafficking network from route to source."



BUSTED: Immigrants nabbed

Abi hits the right notes...

SEXY Abi Titmuss was on song yesterday when she opened a new music store. The 28-year-old Hell's Kitchen babe was also in Woking, Surrey, promoting her new sexy calendar. Fans can see her as a character on cartoon show 2DTV on Monday night.



Picture: TONY LARKIN/REX FEATURES

School stab horror

A SCHOOLGIRL aged 13 was stabbed by a 14-year-old boy in front of horrified classmates. She was slashed across the chest and stomach as she sat at her desk.

A teacher at the school in Chelmsford, Essex used part of her uniform to stem the blood. The girl was released from hospital after treatment. A boy was questioned by police and released on bail.

FORMER Corrie actress Sarah Lancashire, who played Raquel Watts in the soap, was mourning the death of her youngest brother last night. Television journalist Darren Lancashire died at a hospice near Burnley, Lancs, after losing his battle against cancer.

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STAR PAIR: Em and Brian

EMMA B GOOD

Nookie ban as she goes off to jungle

SEXY Emma B faces a sex ban before she heads into the jungle on I'm A Celebrity.

The 24-year-old babe is hotly tipped to appear Down Under in the hit show - with boyfriend Brian Harvey.

But bosses have warned she'll have to keep away from the former East 17 star for nearly two weeks before the show

EXCLUSIVE

by NIGEL PAULEY

begins. Sources claim the couple have agreed to the "no sex - we're celebrities" rule.

In previous years contestants have flown to Australia in a couple of groups.

But this year programme chiefs have decided to keep all the contestants away from each other.

It means the first time they'll meet their fellow celebs is the day they arrive in the jungle camp.

Keen

ITV1 chiefs plan to make sexy model Emma and Brian, 30, the first celeb couple to take part.

An insider said: "Bosses are very keen to have a couple in the jungle this time around."

"So far the favourites to adopt that role are Emma B and Brian."

"But if that's the case, it will mean them being kept apart for nearly a fortnight beforehand."

"It has been decided to



SIGNED: Singer Nicole

Keep all the celebrities away from each other, so there's a much bigger surprise when they arrive in the camp.

Producers expect sparks after lining up the most explosive mix so far on the show, which begins later this month.

Those signed up so far are former All Saint Nicole Appleton, 31; Kylie's ex-lover James Gooding, 29; comic Joe Pasquale, 43; and Three Degrees star Sheila Ferguson, 56.

Swedish bombshell Victoria Silvstedt, 30 and bra model and ex-druggie Sophie Anderton, 27 will also appear on the show.



JUNGLE HOPEFUL: Sexy model Emma B

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GOOD PALS: Neil Jones and Mark Jenkins

'Brent'

A STRICT dad has laughed off being portrayed as a real-life David Brent.

Viewers last night saw Mark Jenkins try to make a success of his holiday with the Jones family at Butlins on ITV's Holiday Showdown.

Every morning he called a meeting to talk about teamwork and commitment.

Once, before a kids' footie match, he ranted: "It's positive energy, all about teamwork. There is no 'I' in team. This is a team holiday."

REALITY TV PAPER OFFICIAL

Hubby's putting on act..

EXCLUSIVE

by JERRY LAWTON

NIGHTMARE reality TV show Wife Swap turned into a dream for hubby Bryan Bounds – because it's landed him a role in Emmerdale.

American Bryan, 41, traded his millionaire missus Deirdre, 39, for cash-strapped Margaret Clark – a 48-year-old mum-of-eight from Wolverhampton.

And it was Margaret who convinced him to rekindle his acting career.

Stardom

The hunk had looked destined for stardom after appearing in US comedy Sex and the City alongside Sarah Jessica Parker.

But after failing for Deirdre he quit acting and moved to Leeds to help run her travel agency.

Bryan said: "I was missing out on something I love and Margaret ordered me to go and get an agent. 'I start filming on Monday and play an American who comes to stay in Emmerdale village.'"

An Emmerdale insider said: "We've reassured him he won't have to indulge in any wife-swapping."



BOUNDS TO WIN: Bryan, above, has seen his acting career take off since Margaret, left, gave him advice on Wife Swap

holiday hell

by MARK JEFFERIES

Show bosses thought his meetings were so similar to scenes from The Office that they played the show's theme tune Handbags and Gladbags every time he gave a talk.

But Mark, 39, saw the funny side. He told the Daily Star: "David Brent is a legend and if I have half as much success as him I will be doing all right!"

Mark and wife Debbie, 36, normally take their kids

Charlotte, 11, and Connor, 8, to Butlins in Skegness.

But for the first week of the show they had to go on a barge around Birmingham with Neil and Caroline Jones and family to sample their dream holiday.

Looking back, Mark said: "It was a rollercoaster of emotions and an experience, but I don't think there's any chance of us going away together again."

● **Holiday Showdown** is on ITV Thursdays at 9pm.



WATER SPORTS: Caroline and Charlotte

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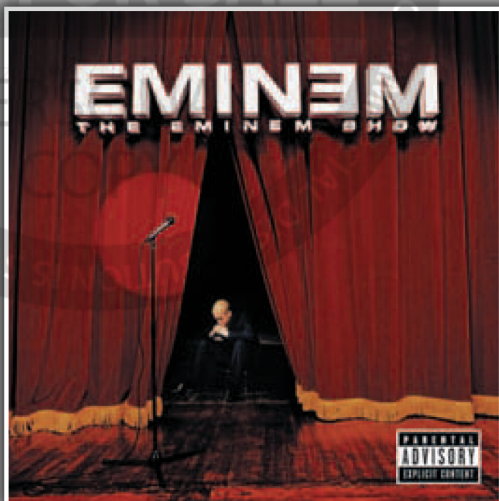
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Diet-mad fellas join battle of the bulge!

TODAY'S man is a vain, diet-mad, secret slimmer.

More and more fellas are joining the inch war just like pop stars Brian McFadden and Robbie Williams, according to new research.

Ex-Westlife crooner Brian turned into a slimline hunk after leaving the Irish band and sticking to a strict Atkins diet. And Robbie, once a washed-

by MARIANNA PARTASIDES

up ex-boy band boozier, is now a trim and sexy solo artist.

Even 17-stone funnyman Peter Kay has joined a gym and signed up to Weight Watchers. And the Daily Star's own columnist Jono Coleman lost almost two stone on telly show Celebrity Fit Club.

But, unlike Jono, a quarter of all men

slim in secret, according to a survey by market researchers Mintel.

It also found most men prefer to exercise in the gym in a bid to shift the extra pounds.

Health

Researchers found two thirds of blokes are now classified as overweight.

Women are expected to stay in shape, says the report, but "it is generally less of a

social stigma for men to be overweight".

Industry bible Slimming magazine has developed a new page called For Him.

Editor Marie Farquharson said: "Men are more spurred on by health factors than women. They want the perfect six-pack."

"They don't say they want to be slim, though, because they think it sounds a bit weedy."



TAKE FAT: Big Robbie and, inset, the slim version



LITTLE 'N' LARGE: Lardy Brian McFadden and, inset, sleek new look

TOYS AND GIRLS

BOYS' toys are being snapped up by gadget-loving girls.

And women will soon be spending more than blokes on gizmos such as iPods and phone cameras.

They already buy a fifth of all gadgets sold on-line, according to research by technology website Dabs.com.

Diane Dillon, a director at Dabs.com, said: "Girls are buying into the techno-revolution and becoming savvy."

by MARIANNA PARTASIDES

Oliver Irish, editor of gadget mag Stuff, said the girly techno-trend will continue.

"Next year they'll spend as much as men, and may even overtake us," he said.

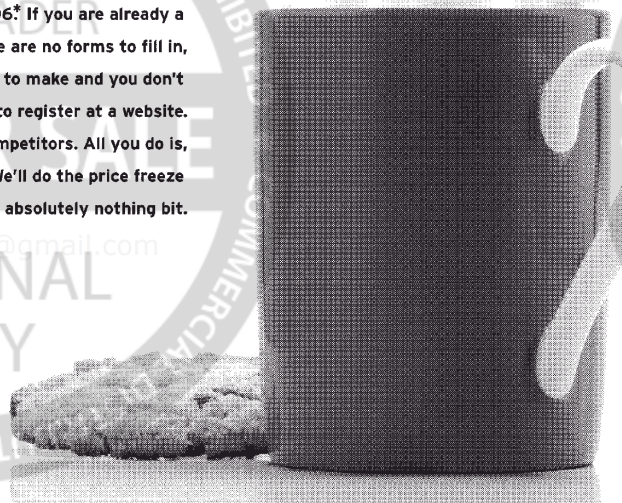
●Top five gadgets: 1. Samsung SGH-E800 mobile phone, 2. Pentax S5i digital camera, 3. Apple iPod mini, 4. Pure Digital Elan radio, 5. Diet control kitchen scales.

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QUICKIE...



WHAT is Matt Goss like?

The former Bros frontman cancelled a recent gig in Crawley, West Sussex, claiming he was ill.

However, we find it most strange that just hours before he made his announcement, the 34-year-old was lashing it up on a Virgin flight from America – in economy.

A fan on the same plane said: "He hardly looked like an ill man." Tut tut.

QUICKIE...

WE laughed aloud when we imagined Jude Law listening to his girlfriend Sienna Miller belt out karaoke.

The sexy screen-siren said: "I do the things that most people do; drink heavily and hang out with my friends."

"I love living in London. I love seeing friends and having dinners and going out for drinks."

"And I love karaoke. These Boots Are Made for Walking is my song at the moment."

Good girl.

QUICKIE...

GORGEOUS Gwen Stefani says she felt humiliated when she had to audition for her debut movie – because she wasn't treated like a star.

The No Doubt singer says she wasn't given special treatment when she read for the role of Jean Harlow in The Aviator and despite her star status, she only had one line.

She said: "It was humiliating because you get used to being a star and there are all these other girls in the same hotel. They are trying out for other parts and they know who you are. It's really awkward."

QUICKIE...



SEXY Sarah Michelle Gellar is "delighted" she's been asked to host this year's MTV Music Awards in Rome.

The Buffy star, 27, will be joining us to party at the lavish event in two weeks' time.

She said: "I can't wait to be in Italy, it's gonna be fab."

Other celebs to attend the star-studded event include Usher and Natasha Bedingfield.



Picture: EAMON AND JAMIE CLARKE

LISA Scott Lee looked serene in black when she turned up to support her husband Johnny Shentall for the opening night of his stage show Starlight Express. The 27-year-old singer – currently promoting her new single Get In On – was "over the moon" to see her man at the Manchester Opera House. She said: "He is so good in the show he's amazing. I've missed him so much since he's been away rehearsing." And the little love-birds made up for their time apart as they puckered up to each other at the after-party in the Hurricane bar.

THE GOSS

With KATIE HIND, LEIGH PURVES and AMY WATTS

LIAM WANTS PATSY BACK

THEY split over four years ago, but now it looks like one of the coolest showbiz couples could be back on.

News has reached us that Oasis rocker Liam Gallagher is smitten yet again with his ex, Emmerdale beauty Patsy Kensit.

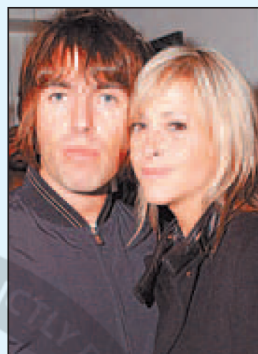
The 32-year-old Mancunian star has been calling Patsy on an extremely regular basis, and it's not just to talk about their five-year-old son Lennon.

Stormy

We revealed just a week ago how Liam had called the actress to say he "really hoped" Patsy would pick up a gong at the National Television Awards, but ever since he has been trying to get her on the phone. A close friend of the Oasis camp said: "Liam always adored Patsy; he always felt that he had got very lucky when they got together."

"Their relationship was always a stormy one, but Liam was happy."

And that's something that perhaps he's not at the moment. Liam, who shot to fame 10 years ago when he and his brother hit the charts with Live Forever, has recently been mirroring his old rock 'n' roll days by taking part in 12-hour booze benders

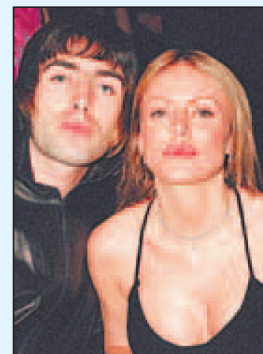


LIAM'S LADIES: The rocker with Nicole, and right, with Patsy

with gaggles of pretty blondes, despite living with former All Saint Nicole Appleton.

We told you first how the pair are on the verge of splitting because Liam won't tie the knot.

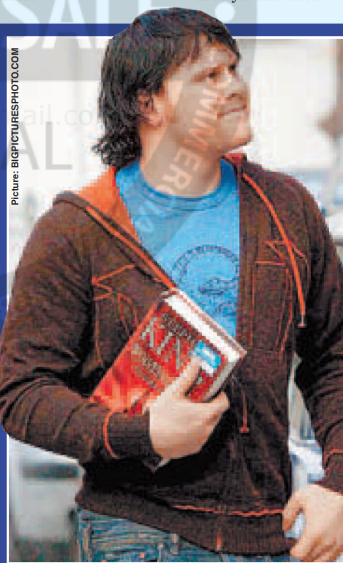
But somehow we don't think 36-year-old Ms Kensit will be interested in going backwards. Her new job in the Dales is miles away from the wild lifestyle she used



to live with Liam, and she claims she has no intention of going back there. She recently said: "It all feels like 150 years ago and I look back and don't have any regrets. I've learned a lot and I accept the things that happened and accept who I am."

"I feel like everything's really calm and there's a lot of harmony in my life."

Unlike Liam's then?



Picture: BIGPICTURES/PHOTO.COM

Looking Bedder

CLUTCHING his new Steven King novel, hunky Daniel Bedingfield appears lost in thought as he heads towards his recording studio in west London.

However, we're delighted he's back in fine form after his near-fatal car crash. In fact, he's Bedder than ever. As well as working on new material, Daniel is on the look out for foxy women.

The 24-year-old singer, whose single Nothing Hurts Like Love has stormed to the top of the charts, said: "When I do find the right woman, I want my mum's view. Her opinion is really important to me."

"I've been put off American women but I still plan to buy somewhere to live out there." Such a shame...

HAVE YOU GOT SOME JUICY GOSSIP FOR US?



PARIS IN THE PINK

PARIS Hilton was steps ahead of her flunkies on the set of her new film in Miami. The 23-year-old Hilton hotel chain heiress showed off her big new hair-do as she headed along the beach towards her trailer – which is decked out in her favourite colour pink.

But there's bad news boys. The sexy blonde – famed for taking her kit off – keeps her togs on in the comedy National Lampoon's Pledge This!

Film bosses tell us she's on fine form playing sultry Victoria, a highly powerful and successful university student.

Sounds like she's been stereotyped to us.

ROBBIE GOES QUIET

POP hunk **Robbie Williams** plans a grand arrival when he moves into his new Sussex home, we can exclusively reveal.

The 30-year-old Angels singer has already got his aides to ring round nearby pubs to plan a party for his friends and family.

A source close to the nearby Red Lion, in Cuckfield, claims the Robster has been on the phone to check out the venue and the cost of hiring the place for a private bash.

"He said he wanted something low key but obviously wants it to be enjoyable for his friends."

"One thing that he made entirely clear though was that he didn't want it to revolve around alcohol, for obvious reasons."

"He wants to use it as more of a way of getting to know the area."

TOP comedian **Eddie Izzard** is hot property in Hollywood.

The 44-year-old has been offered a number of film roles – and has flown out to see which one he prefers.

Ed, who has recently finished filming *The Wild* alongside **Kiefer Sutherland** flew out to LA this week, and he appears to be quite keen on moving there permanently.

A source revealed: "Eddie is really excited about it, he really wants to make himself into a name over there."

FINALLY we can reveal the secret behind why celebs look so good. **Ally McBeal** star **Portia De Rossi** reckons: "If I have an event that I try to look as bad as I possibly can for a week before. Then when that day comes, and I clean myself up, I can look in the mirror and say, 'Oh, you look amazing'... Now you know..."

Racy red gives hot Renée the Edge

RAUNCHY **Renée Zellweger** looked every inch the star as she posed for pictures at the French premiere of *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*.

And while the 35-year-old singleton dazzled in racy red, her co-star **Hugh Grant** appeared slightly jaded and shied away from the cameras in Paris.

The fit fella, who plays the hunky but heartbreaking Daniel Cleaver in the fab flick, was keen to be with his real-life partner **Jemima Khan**.

After signing dozens of autographs at the glitzy premiere, Hugh, 44, made sure he took some time out for a brief romantic encounter with Jemima in Paris.

Jumping

An insider said: "Hugh and Jemima went shopping on the Champs Elysee but Hugh didn't want to be photographed with Jemima and kept jumping out of the way."

Renée, on the other hand, was happy to chat about her recent split with *White Stripes* frontman **Jack White**.

She said: "I just get on with things and make sure I'm always busy."

"I see friends and chill out. I'm taking a long holiday in the New Year."

The brunette, who has shed the 20lb she piled on to play Bridget, will be at the UK premiere in London's Leicester Square next week.

SUPER SLIM: Renée puts the oo-la-la into the Paris premiere of her new film

HUSH HUSH

THIS TV host romps with other celebs including his own manager. The good-looking guy loves a cheeky grope and is secretly seeking solace with a counsellor for a sex addiction. His wicked ways are well known among colleagues who've just about had enough. One producer has even mentioned the words "industrial tribunal". Ouch.

SPOTTED

IN London: *EastEnders* actor **Joe Swash** at Cafe Rouge, Hampstead. **Kelly Brook** being driven along Greek Street and **Edith Bowman** walking through Camden Lock. **Lisa Snowdon** shopping in Selfridges food hall, **Jamie and Jools Oliver** strolling on Hampstead Heath and **Keira Knightley** giggling on her mobile at Glasgow airport.

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Potty! Perv is freed

A PERVERT who had sex with a 14-year-old girl while her parents slept in the next room yesterday walked free from court.

A judge said because William Turton, 31, had smoked cannabis his judgment was clouded.

Turton spent the night at the girl's home after smoking pot with her parents.

He went to sleep on the sofa but found the girl dozing there. They had sex while her parents slept in the next room.

Order

Turton, who had a previous conviction for sex with a 15-year-old girl, later gave himself up to police in Yeovil, Somerset.

He was given a three-year community rehabilitation order and put on the Sex Offenders' Register.

Sentencing him at Dorchester Crown Court Mr Recorder Christopher Wilson-Smith told him: "I am sure that if you had not had cannabis you'd have pushed her away."

Picture: KEN LENNOX



We're game girls

ANGELIC models Lucy Pinder and Michelle Marsh let their fingers do the talking as they test hot new Xbox game Halo 2.

Dazzling Daily Star beauties Lucy, 20, and Michelle, 22, took each other on at the London launch of the new game, in which players battle to save mankind. And our superbabes were right on the button.

DON'T MISS



MOTOR MOUTH

P60-61

CHURCH SCHOOL SAINT IS AXED BY PC NUTS

by MARTYN HALLE

A CHURCH school is to be banned from naming itself after a saint because it might upset kids of other religions.

Angry parents protested that the ruling was just crazy political correctness.

But education bosses in Islington, north London, intend to find a non-religious name for the new Church of England academy, which will replace an existing school named St Mary Magdelene.

Headmaster John Stewart fumed: "If the name St Mary was dropped I wouldn't be happy."

Offend

"There are C of E schools all over the country. Most of them are 'saint' something and it doesn't seem to put people off."

Parent Kate McMurdie, 33, said: "The idea to drop the saint is absolutely ludicrous."

"They say it will offend other religions but this will offend me and many other parents who take our religion seriously."

Church leaders have put £2million into the new school, which was also to be named



SAINT ALIVE: Star Monica

after St Mary Magdelene, played by Monica Bellucci in Mel Gibson's movie The Passion Of The Christ.

Liberal councillor James Kempton said: "We want to create a school that's open to everybody in the community."

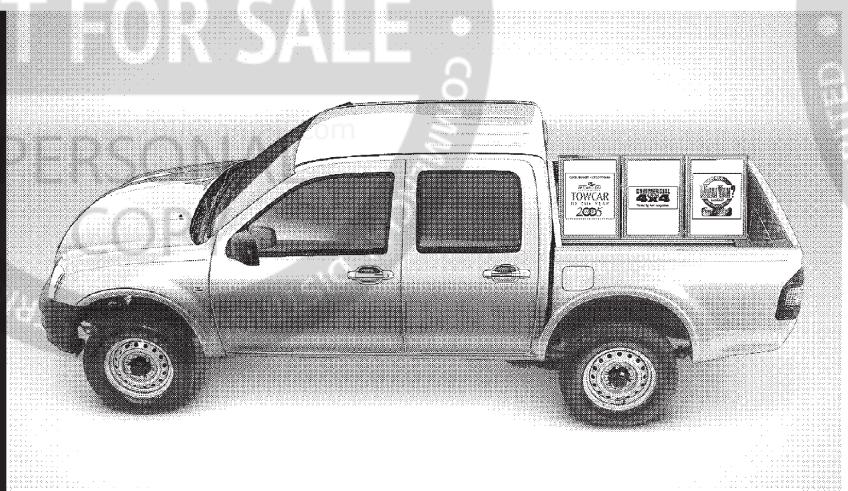
"We need to ensure that it is a school appropriate for Islington in the 21st century, and church-going is a much less significant part of people's lives."

Brave Ashleigh Huxley, 10 - who had 14 ops on leg injuries caused in a crash - has been told by her local council she must walk more than five miles a day to get to and from school. They have axed a free taxi from her home in Salisbury.

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GIVE US A BELL

I CAUGHT up with Tyler Hilton, lead singer of the red-hot Kiwi rockers Steriogram, for a chat

Your first time in Blighty - how are you finding it? It's great, mate. I'm sitting in Trafalgar Square and want to go on one of those bus tours. You've spent a lot of time in the US. Are you missing home? Yeah. We've been in the States for the last two years. We miss our family a lot. How did you get signed? An American guy came across our website and got in touch. We kept sending him demos for months and he shopped them around for us. One got to the head of Capitol records and he signed us. Your single Walkie Talkie Man is on the iPod ads - did they give you nice new computers? Naah mate. We got nothing. Are you big stars back in New Zealand? Yeah we are now, but that's only recently.



JAY Sean is teaming up with Timbaland. The singer, at No.4 with new single Stolen, became pals with the US super producer when they met at an MTV gig. Next time they hooked up in Southall, where Jay took Missy Elliott's mate on the hunt for Indian CDs and blew £3,000. Jay, 23, said: "We drove down in my car listening to my album and he said it was hot. "He was also talking about Justin Timberlake but referring to him as Justin. I was like, 'This is mad'."



Fame

Charlie in Fightstar fix

CHARLIE Simpson's "other" band Fightstar WILL spell the end of Busted.

But before all you Busted fans start calling me with abuse, let me explain. Busted aren't splitting. And yes, they've got two more albums to release before they even think about calling it a day. But Fightstar are SO good I can't see any way the pair can exist together.

Bizarrely, Charlie's contract with Island Records allows him to record and release with as many other bands as he wants.

A spokeswoman said: "He and Fightstar are currently talking to a number of different labels. There's nothing in Charlie's contract preventing him from doing that.

They won't be signing a deal with Island, however."

Seems a bit silly really, especially as Charlie's made no secret of enjoying a harder-edged group.

Busted currently have to deliver two more albums for Island.

They are due in the studio early next year to record their fourth and could well release a greatest hits for their fifth.

As I told you last month, Fightstar signed a mini-deal with Fierce Panda, who gave Coldplay and Keane their big breaks.

The band - Charlie, Alex Westaway, Dan Haigh and Omar Abidi - have a big following on the indie scene and have a punkier sound than Busted.

Noise

Playing their biggest gig to date at London's Underworld, the band were terrifyingly heavy.

Cherry-picking the best bits of hard rockers from Nirvana and Queens Of The Stone to yourcode: name:milo, the gig is a jagged wall of noise from the three guitarists.

The blistering mini-metal meltdowns are accompanied by Charlie's deep bass growl and co-singer Alex's choirboy vocal style.

Tunes like Amethyst, Mono and Swimming In The Water are all genuinely impressive slabs of intelligent and passionate heavy rock.

They will be sizeable.



Picture: SUZAN VALLA/IONIS DIGITAL.COM

Model Boys looking good

DO yourself a favour - go and buy Handsome Boy Modeling School's new album.

White People will sell by word of mouth. All your mates will go and buy it the day after you play it to them, just to be as cool as you.

The latest offering from Dan The Automator and Prince Paul is as varied and imaginative as they come.

It features contributions from Jamie Cullum (left), Pharrell Williams, De La Soul, Rza and Alex Kapranos, to name but a few.

If that's not enough names to tempt you, Dan did all the Gorillaz stuff with Damon Albarn.



LONDON radio station XFM has recruited Embrace, Kasabian, The Zutons and The Departure to play a Winter Wonderland gig for homeless charity, Shelter.

Comic Jimmy Carr and Lauren Laverne are among the hosts at Hammersmith Apollo on December 5.

THE Skandi Girls...credible? No. Moving? No. Irritatingly infectious and probably going to feature at your Christmas party discotheque? I fear so. Their tune Do The Can Can is another one-off Christmas No1 contender. Sorry it's... well, I'm just very sorry about it.

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